

MEMORIAL
OF THE
PRESIDENT AND DIRECTORS
OF THE
SOUTH CAROLINA CANAL AND RAIL ROAD COMPANY,

PRAYING

That the United States may be authorized to subscribe for two thousand five hundred shares of the Capital Stock of said Company.

FEB. 9, 1829.—Referred to the Committee on Roads and Canals. FEB. 19.—Bill reported, [No. 92,] and ordered that this memorial be printed.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

To the Honorable the President and Members of the Senate of the United States of America:

The memorial of the undersigned President and Directors of the South Carolina Canal and Rail Road Company, for and in behalf of themselves and other citizens of this State, being members of and composing the said Corporation, RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH:

That your memorialists are generally citizens of the commercial capital of this State, and immediately engaged in, or remotely connected with mercantile pursuits. That a long and minute acquaintance with the causes which have militated against the prosperity of this city, and fettered its commercial operations, induced your memorialists to seek relief in the application of a remedy, in their estimation calculated to remove one of the most conspicuous and prominent of the evils complained of.

That in the prosecution of a design of general interest, and vast importance, not only to your memorialists, but to the citizens of the State at large, it became expedient and necessary to procure the immediate sanctions of the Legislature of this State; with that view your memorialists did petition for a charter, which should not only acquire ample and very great privileges, but which should extend the duration of those privileges to a period commensurate with the magnitude of the enterprise. That the petition of your memorialists praying such an act in their favor was received by the State Legislature with the strongest marks of consideration and favor, and even under circumstances which permitted the obtrusion of no irrelevant legislation (an extra meeting) they most indulgently concurred in the prayer of your memorialists, and to their utmost extent granted the privileges desired.

Your memorialists take leave to submit the charter then received; and to which they respectfully crave the attentive consideration of your honorable body. From this document, your memorialists humbly conceive, will be de-

duced those striking marks of patronage and favor, which could have been elicited from the wisdom and intelligence that bestowed them; only through strong convictions of the practicability of the scheme, its bearing on the immediate interests of your memorialists, and generally on the commercial and agricultural prosperity of this and contiguous States.

That books for subscriptions were opened, and the Company formed in strict accordance with the letter and requisitions of the act; that by laws adapted to existing circumstances were passed by the Corporation, and the organization of the Company completed in the election of a President and twelve Directors, your present memorialists. That pursuant to the purposes of their appointment, your memorialists have since regularly met for the transaction of the ordinary concerns of the Company, and for the consideration of the various suggestions and communications which the character of the work, and the information sought, were calculated to produce. That your memorialists have collected a large fund of valuable information, replete with assurances of popular favor, and evidences of easy and rapid success in the execution and accomplishment of their designs. They however deem it unimportant to submit to your honorable body the details of this information; a great variety of the most essential parts having been already submitted to the public eye. It is however important, that your honorable body should be informed that the present plan of operations is limited to a Rail Road, and its incidental bridges, causeways, &c. &c. which shall connect the town of *Hamburgh*, in this State, to the city of *Charleston*, a distance of about 140 miles. That on the line of communication, and for a distance exceeding 100 miles, an ascent so regular and gradual is presented, as not to be detected by the eye unaided by instruments, and not a single obstacle of any magnitude is interposed; the face of the country being nearly a continued level, to an extent from the coast perhaps unequalled in any other section of the Union. That for upwards of sixty miles of the designated line, a voluntary concession of land and timber has been accorded to the wants of the Board, and an adequate supply of timber to complete the whole work may be procured at a cost but little exceeding the preparation of the material for use, and the charge of transportation. That the labor requisite for the construction of such a work is abundant, and can be obtained at the most reasonable prices. That a portion of that section of the country over which the road will pass, is reputed healthy, and excites a reasonable expectation that villages will be located in the vicinity of the route, which shall be made to flourish with the prosperity of the enterprise.

Your memorialists would further represent to your honorable body, that *Hamburgh* and the neighboring town of *Augusta*, are the depôts of the products of large and fertile districts, increasing steadily in wealth and the gifts of agricultural industry. That the tide of western migration continues with an unimpeded current to swell the sum of those products very far beyond the mere accessions of skill and application in the present proprietors of the soil. So obvious and rapid are the transitions of the face of the country, from a state of nature to a state of cultivation, that a conclusion is irresistibly forced on the mind, that our western districts will, in the course of a very few years, yield to commerce double their present contributions. Your memorialists have, however, predicated their calculations exclusively on the positive results of past years, and from which alone, unassisted by auxiliary sources of revenue, they are most confident of ample remuneration. Should those calculations be desired, your honorable body are respectfully referred

to the accompanying pamphlet. The present state and future increase of population intimates another, though minor source of profit. All experience serves to establish the fact, that with improved facilities for travelling, the intercourse between remote parts of a State is advanced, mercantile pursuits encouraged, social and friendly interchanges of civility excited and nourished, and the general happiness promoted. Such an establishment will essentially favor these great objects, and confer on the Company a reward commensurate with the facilities extended to the traveller.

Your memorialists owe it to themselves and to their fellow-citizens, to bring to the view of your honorable House, the advantages to be derived to this city, as the consequential results of imparting to commercial operations certainty and confidence. It is scarcely necessary to advert to the numerous vexatious delays and disappointments, which, under existing circumstances, attend the execution of foreign orders—the detention of ships, frequent loss of freights, and interruptions of voyages, from a positive inability on the part of the planter to transfer the contents of his barn to the warehouse of his factor. It is a common occurrence during the autumnal season, to have the navigation of our rivers interrupted by the low state of these waters, and the whole produce of the upper country arrested in its course to market, and compelled to await more propitious seasons; nor is uncertainty and loss to the merchant, the only evil resulting from such events. The same general causes operate to restore, simultaneously, the navigation of every river in the State, and general exertion ensues to press the whole sum of products at once on a limited market: the supply is then disproportioned to the demand, and the planter in turn is made to suffer from a depression of price; and even when the demand is adequate to the supply, freights are necessarily enhanced, producing similar results.

Your memorialists respectfully submit these facts, to illustrate the propriety of a small investment of the public funds in aid of the enterprise, and to evidence the certain profits which must result to the General Government from such an extension of patronage.

Nor does this brief view of the subject, comprehending no more than the practicability of the project, and its indirect and contingent benefit, embrace the whole prospect opened by a successful and prosperous completion of the work. It is merely a link in a chain of improvement, as vast and comprehensive, as obviously practicable, and as distinctly underrating large profits and immense advantages, as any scheme ever submitted to public enterprise. Your memorialists do not extend their views beyond this State; yet they feel assured, that the termination of their labors will be promptly followed by an effort to attract to the Atlantic ports of Georgia and South Carolina, a portion of the products of soils washed by the Mississippi, the Missouri, and Ohio. They confidently appeal to your honorable body, to the observations of the intelligent, to the eye of science, or the acquisitions of the practical mind, to say whether there can be traced on the map of our common country, a shorter and more direct communication with the Mississippi, than over that tract of territory which intervenes between Augusta on the *Savannah*, and Florence on the Tennessee river. The whole distance to be accomplished, is but *three hundred and forty miles*, over the face of a country where not one formidable stream or mountain impediment is interposed to excite doubt or apprehension. When this great work is finished, (and a very few years will witness its commencement,) from the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi, the products of those fertile and exhaustless regions, may, in seven days, find a market at Charleston or Savannah.

Independent of the recompense to be derived to individual enterprise and capital from the successful prosecution of this extensive design, the patriot and statesman will anticipate, with proud satisfaction, the higher benefit conferred on the Republic. The protective arm of the general government will be extended and invigorated, in the ratio of the promptitude and effect communicated to all its measures. Should our seaport towns be invaded, in a very few hours the contents of our western armories would be made to subserve purposes of defence, and with the emergency, as quickly transferred for the protection of our frontier. The maximum of power would be imparted to physical energy in the facility given to concentrate forces, and direct their action. Moral and intellectual improvement would be stimulated to their highest exertion by those friendly collisions, and frequent occasions for emulation intimated by general and social intercourse; while the political bonds which unite the Western and Atlantic States, our common country, in one common compact, would receive strength and perpetuity from those reciprocal interests, obligations, and dependencies it would necessarily create.

Your memorialists, from such considerations of the immediate and remote results of their enterprise, do most humbly and respectfully invite the patronage and aid of your honorable body, and that you would authorize and direct, under the provisions of their charter, a subscription to be made to the capital stock of the South Carolina Canal and Rail Road Company, of 2,500 shares; and, as in duty bound, they will ever pray.

WM. AIKEN, *President*
South Carolina Canal and Rail Road Company.

EDWIN P. STARR, *Secretary.*